

**STATEMENT OF GLENN MARSHALL  
REPRESENTATIVE  
NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS  
IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL 304, AN ACT MAXIMIZING JOBS FOR STATE  
WORKERS BY REQUIRING LOCAL CONSTRUCTION HIRING REPORTS OF  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS**

Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce committee. My name is Glenn Marshall, and I am a Business Manager of the New England Regional Council of Carpenters in western Connecticut, and I am here today to testify in support of Raised Bill 304, An Act Maximizing Jobs for State Workers by Requiring Local Hiring Reports of Economic Development Funds..

I want to thank the chairs for raising this important issue.

The nation and Connecticut are gradually recovering. The slow progress of the economic recovery has been particularly tough on those of us in the construction industry. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that Connecticut has lost nearly 22,000 construction jobs since 2007, roughly 30% of the industry's entire workforce. Unemployment in the construction industry reached well over 20% at the depths of the great recession and still remains in double digits for our industry.

The personal toll on Connecticut construction workers and their families has been devastating.

Prolonged unemployment in the construction industry has strained Connecticut taxpayers and businesses as well. For instance, the state's Unemployment Compensation Fund has been insolvent since 2009 due to the recession and is currently underfunded by more than \$500 million dollars. Companies that have survived the recession will pay assessments for another two to three years just to pay off the principal and interest on this borrowed money from the federal government. Medicaid enrollees in Connecticut have increased from a little over 530,000 in 2007 to over 712,000 in 2010. Unemployment in the construction industry doesn't account for all of this increase but it's a major contributor. Connecticut spends millions of dollars on workforce training, but we need jobs to place the people who are trained. Connecticut needs to get a better return on its investments.

Connecticut awards hundreds of millions of dollars of tax credits, tax abatements, grants, payments, loans and other forms of economic assistance each year to keep and attract businesses to our state. We need transparency. We need to make sure we maximize the return to our state economy and to our taxpayers. We need a more direct linkage between the construction jobs that are created by economic development assistance using taxpayer dollars and jobs for those same taxpayers that are footing the bill. The local hiring plan required by

this legislation will bring some transparency and additional accountability for hiring Connecticut construction employers and workers.

That is why we strongly support the intent of this legislation but suggest the following changes:

- We recommend that it apply to projects that receive state assistance totaling \$10 million or more and result in the major renovation or new construction to their facilities;
- Section 1 (d) include workers as well as businesses. So, in the last sentence just add: Such letter shall include a list of proposed steps such recipient shall take to contract with Connecticut businesses and to hire Connecticut construction workers;
- Other areas of the country have implemented similar plans that include local hiring requirements and/or responsible employer language.

Over the past eight years, the Connecticut legislature has implemented results-based accountability (RBA), which uses regularly collected data to measure whether a program is achieving its goals. This bill is one more step in the legislature's effort to support results-based accountability.